and that you will not dispute that the general issue of individual choice has been involved in the debate. However, there is no substitute for collecting concrete information about public attitudes. I may be too deeply influenced by the expressions of anti-fluoridation leaders, such as you quote

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

April 22, 1969

Professor Joshua Lederberg
Stanford University School of Medicine
Stanford Medical Center
300 Pasteur Drive
Palo Alto, California   94304

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

Enclosed is the reprint you requested.

I must comment on your Washington Post column
of March 22, 1969, which I found disappointing. You
dismissed my fluoridation hypothesis off handedly with-
out considering the evidence. You then fail to see that
all elections involve a potential suppression of a min-
ority. Moreover, the literature in political science
does not support your interpretation of the conflict
between the liberty of the individual and the liberty
of the community which can be described as the conflict
between private regarding and public regarding attitudes.
Studies indicate that private regarding attitudes are
dominant. In the fluoridation controversy people would
most likely then be calculating their own advantages and
disadvantages rather than those that accrue to the com-
munity.

Really? dism. it? dism. it

    I have to accept your criticism,
and would admit that I would have dealt
more comprehensively with your thesis
were there space. My interpretation of
the "votes" is admittedly almost entirely
intuitive, and based on discussions I have
heard around Stanford. *However, there are also few issues that elicit technical
unanimity, so I am not sure that fluoridation is typical of political decision-
making. Why not research the very point, whether votes reflect private anxieties
or public-regarding attitudes in this particular arena. *Many of my undecided friends
point to the availability of fluoride by other routes as an important argument.*

sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg.

To respond to your own thesis

Sincerely,

Harvey M. Sapolsky/jk

Harvey M. Sapolsky